

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Name Change: Goodbye ViacomCBS, Hello Paramount

ViacomCBS is betting on its future as a global content powerhouse across streaming and linear, and it has a new name that it hopes to better communicate that vision. ViacomCBS Chairman *Shari Redstone* opened the company's investor day Tuesday by introducing the new moniker: **Paramount Global**, or Paramount for short.

Streaming undoubtedly emerged as the company's favorite child during the presentation, although linear networks did receive brief mentions throughout. 4Q21 was the company's best ever in terms of new streaming subscribers with gains coming in at 9.4 million. Some 80% of those were on **Paramount+**, while AVOD **Pluto TV** added 10 million monthly active users. Pluto now reaches an audience of nearly 65 million active users. These record numbers have Paramount feeling lucky, and it now anticipates reaching 100 million subscribers on Paramount+ and **Showtime** by 2024, up from the 65-75 million it estimated at its investor day in 2021. Now, it expects to hit that 65-75 million goal by the end of 2022.

Of course, a streaming push means big spending on content. Last year, the company said it expected streaming content expenses to exceed \$5 billion in 2024—with \$4 billion of that associated with DTC services. Now, the company expects DTC content expense to grow from \$2.2 billion last year to more than \$6 billion in 2024. "Given these investments, we forecast DTC OIBDA losses will be greatest in 2023, but will improve

in 2024 when our global DTC businesses will start to see the benefits of our full content slate," said CFO *Naveen Chopra*, who also outlined a new reporting structure that divvies the business into three segments: TV Media (includes cable and broadcast nets), Filmed Entertainment (Paramount Pictures and Nickelodeon Studios) and Direct-to-Consumer.

All this streaming talk doesn't mean the company has forgotten its MVPD partners. CEO *Bob Bakish* said that since ViacomCBS came together, it has consistently gotten deals done with US MVPDs—most recently **Comcast**. "Those deals are now very contemporary in that they combine linear feeds, advanced ad sales and apps in a very strong partnership," he said. "We're clearly a cornerstone content provider, and we look forward to growing businesses in that space, particularly as they go after broadband and leveraging their broadband accounts into video. Again, we're a natural partner."

Arriving in the year ahead will be new features designed to make the streaming services even easier for customers to navigate. Some of the improvements have already begun being introduced, including linear franchise and genre channels on Paramount+. Some 20 of these channels are available now for U.S. users, and those taking advantage of the feature are spending 40% more time on the service than they were before.

"It's easy entertainment that demands nothing of the viewer because our programming team does the work, and it drives effortless discovery and engagement, bringing the best of our deep catalog to the fore," President/CEO, Streaming *Tom*

We asked the Most Powerful Women what female empowerment book they think every woman should read.

They had a ton of recommendations. Here are a few of the books on their shelves.

Visit [CablefaxWomen.com](https://www.cablefax.com) for complete Q&As and more book recommendations.



Ryan said.

Those that purchase Paramount+ and **Showtime** as part of a bundle will see their experience enhanced this summer with the introduction of a streamlined sign-up. Subscribers will be able to access Showtime content from within the Paramount+ app, although the Showtime app will remain available to use for those that prefer that experience.

International was a thread throughout the investor day presentation, both in terms of international launches and global programming IP. Paramount plans to launch Paramount+ in the UK, South Korea and the Caribbean by the end of the summer, and additional launches in Italy, Germany, France, Switzerland and Austria will be completed by the end of the year. Asia, Africa and the Middle East will become the focus in 2023. On the content side, Paramount is making Paramount+ the streaming home for all of the company's movies following their theatrical runs, starting with 2024 releases.

It's also finding ways to get the most out of its content in international markets. For example, reality competition series "The Challenge: War of the Worlds" will feature winners from the US, Argentina, Australia and the UK advancing to a global tournament. "Because it takes place in one location, we're creating five series for nearly two thirds the cost," explained *Chris McCarthy*, Chief Content Officer, Adult Animation & Reality Programming for Paramount+.

SUPER BOWL LVI BREAKS 100M VIEWERS

NBCUniversal is cheering the most-watched Super Bowl in five years, with more than 112 million viewers tuning in across **NBC, Telemundo, Peacock, NBC Sports Digital, NFL Digital platforms** and **Yahoo Sports** mobile properties. That puts LVI as the most-watched game since 2017's matchup, which notched 113.7 million on **FOX**. The game averaged 99.2 million viewers on NBC, a 4% improvement over last year's game. Telemundo—the first-ever Spanish-language broadcast net to air the big game—averaged 1.9 million viewers. Streaming, led by Peacock, added another 11.2 million viewers, according to NBCU. The Super Bowl helped Sunday's Winter Olympics ratings, with primetime coverage after the game delivering a total audience delivery of 24 million. According to **iSpot.tv's** cross-platform measurement, the 81 national advertisements during the Super Bowl were responsible for more than 40% of TV ad impressions on linear. The average ad reached 106 million viewers, while the game generated 4.39 billion verified household ad impressions across all platforms in 216 minutes.

FCC NARROWS REGULATIONS FOR MTES

The **FCC** voted 4-0 to adopt rules blocking broadband providers from entering into select revenue sharing agreements

The **WHO** and the **WHY**

CFX's spotlight on recent new hires & promotions



AISHA

Thomas-Petit
CHIEF PEOPLE AND DIVERSITY OFFICER,
AMC NETWORKS

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Aisha stepped into her new role overseeing people and culture strategy earlier this month following the departure of Jennifer Caserta. It's a time of transformation for AMC Networks' leadership following the departures of Josh Sapan, Ed Carroll and Linda Schupack, but Aisha is used to charting her own path. She joined the programmer in December 2020 as the company's first Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer.
- Aisha oversaw the development of a "Self-ID" and culture assessment campaign for AMC Studios' original productions and co-productions to determine demographic breakdowns of production staff and whether those individuals felt respected and heard.
- She has been a huge advocate for meaningful partnerships, leading discussions with the Geena Davis Institute, Color of Change, Endeavor Content and more. Under Aisha's leadership, AMC Networks has launched a mentoring program for underrepresented writers, a job matching platform for underrepresented crew and an internal sensitivity process for its film library and all content moving forward.

with owners of multi-tenant environments. That includes apartments, public housing and office buildings. The new regulations require providers to inform tenants about any existing exclusive marketing agreements in clear language and to make that information as accessible as possible. In a separate declaratory ruling, the Commission clarified that existing agency rules tied to cable inside wiring block sale-and-leaseback agreements that prevent alternative providers from effectively competing.

NAB ASKS FCC FOR FRESH LOOK AT BROADCASTERS

NAB President/CEO *Curtis LeGeyt* has only sat in the driver's seat of the association for two months, but he's ready to transform how the **FCC** regulates the broadcast industry. During an appearance at a **Media Institute** virtual luncheon, he urged the Commission to recognize how social media platforms and Big Tech have challenged broadcasters' bottom lines. "It is imperative that the FCC recognize that the broadcast industry's ability to function in the public interest is fundamentally premised on its economic viability," he said. "This means the Commission must consider whether each existing and new regulation will

help or impede broadcasters' ability to thrive in a media environment dominated by other platforms." For LeGeyt, a key to ensuring broadcasters' success long into the future will be the Commission's support of the transition to ATSC 3.0. He highlighted it as the biggest broadcast-related topic he hopes FCC Chair *Jessica Rosenworcel* focuses on in the coming months, calling it key to the ability of those broadcasters to serve their local communities. "We're excited to partner with her to ensure ATSC 3.0 is not just successful from a technical perspective, but that we have set up a model where broadcasters will actually invest in this business side-by-side with consumer electronics manufacturers and reach audiences in ways that will really serve to benefit American communities by giving them a continued alternative to cable news and social media," he said. The **NAB Show** is scheduled to return to Vegas for a live program April 23-27, and LeGeyt is confident the association will be able to pull it off without having to transition to a virtual show. "The reality here is there is pent-up demand from the entire NAB Show community. That's our exhibitors, it's the broadcast industry and, frankly, it is the broader range of media that make up a vast share of the attendees at that show," he said. "I was at CES in early January and while the numbers may have been slightly down, what I heard from the exhibitors... those who were there to do business had a great experience."

FCC, NTIA SIGN NEW SPECTRUM COORDINATION DEAL

The **FCC** and **NTIA** are making moves to improve spectrum management across all federal agencies. The Spectrum Coordination Initiative announced Tuesday will see both agencies strengthen their processes for information sharing and resolving spectrum policy issues. FCC Chair *Jessica Rosenworcel* and Assistant Commerce Secretary *Alan Davidson*, who heads **NTIA**, have agreed to monthly meetings where the pair will discuss joint spectrum planning. The two agencies will also begin updating their Memorandum of Understanding, which hasn't been revamped in nearly two decades, to address certain gaps in how the government manages its spectrum. The FCC and NTIA have committed to developing a national spectrum strategy and participating in cross-agency advisory groups to bring about better technical engagement across industry and other federal agencies. We'll hear more from Davidson about spectrum strategy and the distribution of infrastructure funding on Wednesday at noon ET when he appears before the **House Subcommittee on Communications and Technology** for an NTIA Oversight hearing.

MULTICULTURAL AUDIENCES EMBRACE ANTENNAS

Horowitz Research's State of OTA 2021 study found 21% of Black and 33% of Latinx and Asian cord-cutters use an OTA antenna, translating to 2.5 million Black, 5.7 million Latinx and 2.3 Million Asian adults. Among these groups, 6 in 10 consumers say access to local broadcast channels is the main reason for getting an antenna, with local news being important to 76% of Black, 68% of Latinx and 82% of Asian cord-cutters. All three groups place high importance on content that's culturally relevant to them. Even those who subscribe to MVPDs or streaming services are finding ways to use antennas. Horowitz

found 10% of MVPD subscribers have an antenna, as 63% have it in case of a cable or satellite outage, 47% use it to avoid paying for a cable or satellite box, and 43% for TV sets that don't have an MVPD subscription. Antenna users with no MVPD service spend 57% of their time viewing content through their antenna and 37% streaming. Nearly four in 10 Black, Latinx and Asian content watchers without an antenna say they'd be likely to get one in the future. The survey was conducted in October-November 2021 in English and Spanish among 1,600 TV content viewers (708 among antenna users).

GCI TAPS HARMONIC FOR NETWORK VIRTUALIZATION

GCI is deploying **Harmonic's** CableOS Platform in an effort to virtualize its access network. The operator will be able to reduce its number of hub sites thanks to the service's virtualized CMTS software and Ripple Remote-PHY node. GCI is also taking advantage of Harmonic's CableOS Central analytics, an AI-powered data-driven network monitoring and management system.

ALL-STAR READY

The 2022 NBA All-Star Game weekend is set to tip off with **NBA TV, TNT** and **TBS** providing total coverage of the events leading up to the contest. Airing Friday at 4pm, NBA TV's 90-minute special "Hoops & Harmony" looks at the intertwinement of music and basketball. Then, Howard University and Morgan State face off in the "NBA HBCU Classic" at 2pm on Saturday — available on NBA TV and TNT. At 8pm, TNT will follow it up with "All-Star Saturday Night" featuring a skills challenge, 3-point and slam dunk contests and more. The NBA G League Next Gem Game will begin Sunday at 2pm on NBA TV and showcase the league's up-and-coming stars. To culminate the weekend, the 71st All-Star game tips off Sunday at 8pm with *Ernie Johnson*, *Charles Barkley*, *Shaquille O'Neal* and *Kenny Smith* interacting with fans throughout the game on TBS. Players *Stephen Curry*, *Donovan Mitchell* and *Ja Morant*, both coaches and all officials will wear microphones during the game, allowing the broadcast to listen in at any moment. The regular telecast will be on TNT, with the all-access broadcast available on TBS.

PROGRAMMING

E! greenlit docuseries "Welcome Home Nikki Glaser?" as the comedian returns from Hollywood to her hometown of St. Louis in a journey of self-discovery. The unscripted reality sitcom premieres May 1 at 10pm with back-to-back episodes. – Three episodes of the new **Max Original** series "Julia" will debut March 31 on **HBO Max**. The comedy is centered on chef *Julia Child* and her long-running public television series, "The French Chef." – "Barry" returns for a third season on **HBO**, with the eight-episode season beginning April 24 at 10pm. Episodes will be available to stream on **HBO Max**. – **Telemundo** revealed more shows for its upcoming "Tplus" brand on **Peacock**, including a distribution agreement with Mediterráneo Mediaset España Group for new shows. Tplus titles coming to Peacock later this year include "Madres. Amor y Vida," "La Verdad" and "Los Relojes de Diablo." – **Lifetime** announced a multiyear deal with *Melissa Joan Hart* to star in, direct and executive produce multiple network movies. Hart will star in the movie "Dirty Little Secret" and appear in the network's "It's a Wonderful Lifetime" movie slate in 2022 and 2023.